A brief description of a

CONFERENCE,

BETWIXT

A Nationall PRESBYTERIAN,

AND

An INDEPENDENT (so called.)

(Lately held at *Dunbing* in the County of *Somerset.*)

WITH

The Arguments of the said Dispute, briefly handled,

By Captain *Francis Freeman.*

Together with M. *Balsomes* Answer (as I understand) in the behalf of M. *George Milward.*

Also Captain *Freemans* Reply to the said Answer; wherein is answered these foure Queres: *viz.*

1 *Whether it be lawfull to confesse sinnes to God.*
2 *Whether we may pray for the pardon of our sins.*
3 *Whether we ought to be sorrowfull for sin.*
4 *Whether the Law be null under the Gospell.*

Published and set forth by the said Captain *Freeman* for the better satisfaction of others.

London: Printed for *Giles Calvert*, at the black Spread Eagle at the West end of *Pauls.* 1647.

ALthough many excellent truths hath been heretofore publisht in print, by men of riper wits and better judgments concerning this subject of Infants Baptisme; yet I have thought good (in the vindication of the truth, and power of godlinesse, and for the better satisfaction of many scrupling Consciences) to publish this ensuing Treatise: Not ayming at any private end, or particuler interest of mine own, but for thy good; that the truth may be the more manifested, the Kingdom of Antichrist destroyed, Christ Jesus exalted in the Ministrie of his Gospel, that there may be a right dispensation of Doctrine and Sacraments, & that the Gospel may flourish, and be set up in thy heart, in its puritie and power, which is the desire of thy friend, &c.

Now I shall give thee to understand that there was (not long since) a Conference held at Doubting in the County of Somerset, betwixt a National Presbyterian, and an Independent (so called) about the point of Infants Baptisme; which was the occasion of my writing on this subject, as is well known to many godly Christians; whose desire (together with mine own) is not to take up, and hold forth any thing neither in doctrine nor practise, but what the word shall warrant for truth. And although many bitter scandalous imputations, & aspersions have been cast upon us (undeservedly) since that time by our enemies, behind our backs; nay some of them to our faces, stigmatizing and branding us by the names of Hereticks, Sectaries, and Schismaticks, and divers other opprobrious termes, to the troubling of weak Consciences, and the utter ruine of our persons and estates, as much as in them lay. I have (in the vindication of that truth held forth by us) given thee the very same verbatim which I sent unto Mr. George Millward *of Shepton-Mallet, he being the principal werb in this hard sentence against us: as also Mr.* Balsom's *Answer (as I understand) thereunto in his behalf: together with my Reply to the said Answer; more largly discovering my thoughts concerning the same subject; which subject, together with Tythes, are (as I conceive) the main props and pillars of Antichrist, upheld only by the Magistrate; Tythes being settled by an Ordinance (though limited) for a year, yet (I presume) it hath as weak a foundation as the Presbyterian Government had for three. All which I refer to the godly wise to judge.*

Reader, I am to give thee further notice, that the Author of this

volume, and as (I conceive) not worth the answering; it containes a whole quire of paper and upwards, with a ballad at the latter end of it (as the Author himself stiles it) and earnestly (by way of a jear) desires me to put it in print; by this thou maist easily judge of his folly: and truly for my part (if it were worth the printing) I cannot see how it is possible it should passe our Independent press, the phrase & method being not suitable to our Independent spirits; neither can I have it printed by a Presbyterian press, unlesse it be licenced by an Antichristian power. Therfore if the Author please, he may repaire to Mercurius Aulicus, *and he (no doubt) will write an Epistle in commendations of it: and so by that means, it may passe the same press where his Pamphlets were printed, and may be sold according to its worth; especially if it be set in a good tune, as* Fortune my foe, &c. *or to the tune of the* London Apprentice, *or some such pretty tune: But peradventure my Antagonist may be of another mind long ere this time, for ought I know he may help ring the changes at Shepton-Mallet, as well as the Citizens did in London, when our Army marcht through the City, for we know that there is a strange alteration since he wrote his ballad, and therefore he may be of another temper, he may now be metamorphosed into an Independent.*

But Reader, I must desire thee to excuse me for writing in such a phrase, or dialect; for I must confesse, it is not my wonted practice so to do, neither is it suitable to my spirit, nor any other spirit rightly qualified: but I the rather force my self to do it at this time, to give thee a hint or taste of the very same phrase and method, that my Antagonist writes unto me, as may evidently appear by his Answer to my first; and that it may be a means somewhat to reclaime him from the like practice for the future, I shall now desire thee to read this Book throughout, with a diligent carefulnesse, and weigh each perticular according to its several weight, without any prejudicate opinion, and I shall rest,

Thy servant,
Francis Freeman.

To

To his well-wiſhed Friend, M. *George Milward* at Shepton-Mallet, theſe preſent.

SIR,

HAving met you lately at Doubting at a Conference between Mr. *Browne* and Mr. *Franklin*, where I found you very much inclined to Mr. *Franklin* (being a Diſciple of his) to maintain and uphold the argument, which was then in diſpute, to be ſufficiently proved, and cleared on his ſide; when as indeed he proved nothing at all. Beſides, I find by late ſpeeches from honeſt men, that you do not only your ſelf, but divers others alſo of the ſame ſtamp, take occaſion, not onely to think, but ſpeak wickedly of all thoſe which you account Independents, in going about to render us odious and vile to the world, becauſe we are ſo in your eſteem, being contrary to you in judgment. You alſo blaze about the Countrey, that the Independents had nothing to ſay for themſelves: therfore I have thought good to write unto you ſomthing touching the point, which was then in hand; and I doubt not but to give ſuch ſatisfaction, that may be a meanes to ſtop the mouthes and tongues of all ſuch ſcandalous perſons, and to diſcover ſuch truths, as may give good contentment to many poor weak Chriſtians. I ſhall (for our more orderly proceeding) as God ſhall inable me (in the vindication of M. *Brown* and others who are accounted Independents) Firſt ſet down the point which was to be cleared by M. *Franklin*, and that was to prove the lawfulneſſe of baptizing of Infants. Secondly, the manner of his Argument, which was by way of queſtion. Thirdly, M. *Browns* Anſwer, which was likewiſe by way of queſtion too. And laſtly, thoſe Texts of Scriptures by which M. *Franklin* endeavoured to cleare the point.

The firſt Argument, or rather Queſtion was, Whether or no children of Believers being come to growth, and being Believers themſelves, were ever baptized, according to your practice?

M. *Browns*

M. *Browns* Anſwer, or rather queſtion was, That children of Believers, being come to growth, and being Believers themſelves, whether or no, he would or ought refuſe to baptize them, he being a Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt.

So that there was no anſwer at all, to any purpoſe, on neither ſide, negative nor affirmative; but after a long debating of the matter in queſtion on both ſides, M. *Franklin* endeavoured to make good the lawfulneſſe of baptizing of Infants, but could not do it: for, the firſt place in Scripture which he inſiſted upon, was that 1 *Cor.*7.14. the words are theſe: *For the unbelieving husband is ſanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is ſanctified by the husband, els were your children unclean, but now they are holy.*

M. *Franklins* expoſition upon this text was, 1. That there was an eſſentiall difference betwixt ſanctified and being holy: the husband or the wife being but as the veſſells of the Sanctuary, ſet apart for a holy uſe; but the children are actually holy, and the parents inſtrumentally holy, to produce a holy ſeed, which admits of an abſurdity. Again ſaid M. *Franklin*, v. 12. *I, & not the Lord*, that is, ſaid M. *Brown*, he had no expreſſe command from Chriſt, nor cleare revelation for it, but it was his judgment, as one that had the mind of Chriſt, the ſpirit of the Lord: that is, ſaid M. *Franklin*, Chriſt gave no command for it, when on earth; but revealed it immediately from heaven to the Apoſtle.

The concluſion will be, that Chriſt gave not a word about infants Baptiſme, when on earth, but after his aſcenſion he revealed ſomthing immediately to the Apoſtle concerning it: where the meaning of that text is, that like as all things are clean to the cleane, ſo is the Unchriſtian woman to the Chriſtian man; ſo that he may be converſant in company with her, and not offend; and that the children of them are not to be imputed unlawfull & impure: ſo that it is but imputative holineſſe: not that children are by nature cleane and pure, without ſin; for that were againſt the Apoſtle himſelfe, who proveth Rom.5. that all are under originall ſin, and naturally the children of Gods wrath, Eph.2. ſo that there can be no inherent grace to make them holy.

Two places more in Scripture he produced, and inſiſted largely upon them, to prove the point, and then deſired a little time to refreſh himſelfe, but came not at all to uphold his Argument, but very abruptly went his way: the one was that in Exod. 12. 37. compared

compared with that 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2, 3. the words are these in Exod *And the Children of Israel journied from Ramases to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children.* And that in the Corinthians, *Moreover brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea.* 2 *And were all baptized unto* Moses *in the cloud, and in the sea.* 3 *And did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.*

Now I shal endeavour to give you the true sense and meaning of these places of Scripture, by way of Argument, and so proceed to prove the unlawfulnesse of baptizing of Infants, and I doubt not, but by Gods blessing to make it evident and cleer.

The First Argument: If infants did partake of Baptisme in the Type, then are they to partake of it in the substance. But infants did partake of Baptisme in the type. *Ergo*, They are to partake of it in the substance. That infants did partake of Baptisme in the type is proved, Exod. 12. compared with 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2, 3.

Answ. The former part of the proposition that infants did partake of Baptisme, I shall not much question at present, although exceeding questionable.

Yet the latter part of the proposition, I deny, that if infants did partake of it in the type; then they are to partake of it in the substance. Grounds of deniall;

1 First we are not to administer Gospel Ordinances, after any legal type or institution, but according to Gospel rules. See Act. 3. 22, 23. the ground of it. 1 Types, and legall institutions were dark and mystical. To follow the type, would be to walk in legal darknesse, and not in the Gospel light: which is the cause of much confusion, at this present day.

2 Legal types and institutions, were tipicall of spiritual things, for us to leave the substance, and follow the type, is to deny Christ to be come in the flesh. This is the Antichrist whom God will destroy, with the breath of his mouth and brightnes of his coming.

Answ. 2. For cleering of the truth in hand; that infants are not to pertake of Baptisme in the substance, though in the type. The ground of it; The Church of the Jewes was typical it self: The naturall seed, was accounted for the seed; and so partakes

of

of Ordinances in the type: But now under the Goſpel, there is no ſeed, but that of faith, Rom.4.14,15,16. Gal.3.26.29.

So here is the truth, and all that can be gathered in matter of practice: that as all the natural ſeed partakes of Ordinances in the type, ſo all the ſpirituall ſeed are to partake of Ordinances in the ſubſtance, & none are the ſpiritual ſeed, but that of faith, Rom.2.28

Quere. One doubt or quere in the firſt part of the propoſition whether infants did partake of baptiſme in the type.

Object. They all went through the ſea, both women and children, therefore partakers of baptiſme.

Anſw. The text ſaith, 1 Cor.10.2,3. all our fathers were baptized, no mention of children, although it is true, there were children, ſo there were flocks of Sheep and Beeves: *quere*, whether the Scripture ſaith any where, that the children were baptized more then the ſheep and beeves?

The Scripture ſaith, our fathers were baptized; thoſe children were our forefathers, therefore baptized: If the fathers baptized in the ſea were ſuch as fell in the wilderneſſe, the children did not fall in the wilderneſſe, therefore the Apoſtle intends not them: and thus you may ſee tis clear.

And if ſo be you will grant that which muſt needs be granted, and that is that Chriſt never inſtituted, nor appointed any holy Ordinance to be adminiſtred to his children, but for their good; then ſhall I alſo make it clear, that baptizing of infants doth them no good, but is vain and ſinfull to any that ſhall adminiſter it unto them; for what is not of faith is ſin: and there is no faith, but is grounded upon ſome promiſe of God, in and through Chriſt. There is no precept nor preſident for baptizing of infants; therefore no promiſe: but the Scripture holds forth both precept and preſident for baptizing of beleevers, therefore promiſes. As for example, *Go teach all nations, &c.* there is a precept, 1 to teach, and then to baptize: ſo there is a promiſe to beleeevers; *He that beleeveth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved, &c.* The Scriptures are full of examples in this kind.

Now to make it evident that baptizing of infants, doth them no good, but is vain and ſinfull to them that ſhall adminiſter it, I ſhall give you theſe folſowing Arguments; 1 That God hath decreed from all eternity ſuch as ſhall be ſaved: If infants are within the compaſſe of that decree, whether baptized or not baptized,

they ſhall be ſaved: But if an infant be not within the compaſſe of that decree, then Baptiſme cannot ſave him, nor availe him any thing to do him any good.

Again ſecondly, if an infant be born within the compaſſe of that decree, and die before Baptiſme, then is he ſaved by vertue of that decree: but if an Infant be baptized, and ſo dies after Baptiſm, being not born within the compaſſe of that decree, his Baptiſm cannot ſave him, nor avail him anything to do him any good.

Therfore this holy Ordinance ought not to be adminiſtred to infants not capable of faith; neither can it do them any good: but if ſo be that children of believers are come to that maturity of growth in the knowledge of God in Chriſt, being able in ſome meaſure to manifeſt faith, repentance, and turning unto God: then ought a Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt to baptize them, not as they are the ſeed of believers, but becauſe they are believers themſelves, and becauſe that Baptiſm is the firſt admiſſion into the Church of Chriſt: ſo ſhall they be partakers of all his holy Ordinances, and be made members of Chriſt, and enjoy the ſweet embraces of Chriſt, and that ſweet communion and fellowſhip of his Saints.

To his well-wiſhed friend, Capt. Freeman *at his quarters, deliver theſe.*

SIR,

I Received your Letter, with a ſuperſcription to your well-wiſhing friend, and indeed it's true; for I wiſh you well at home in an honeſt calling, that it may be ſaid of you as of the wiſe woman, Prov. 31. 27. *She looketh well to the wayes of her houſhold* (I ſuppoſe in praying with them, and catechizing of them, &c.) *that ſhe eat not the bread of idleneſſe.* Miſtake not, the ſervice of the State is that I like, and the thing for which I have ventured my all in reſpect of outward things. But Sir, when wars are ended, ſtill to keep on our armour, and to let out our hearts and wits (being not other wayes imployed) againſt the glorious privileges of the people of God, is offenſive & grievous to thoſe that love peace and quietneſſe. You tell me of an offence taken at a meeting, when the conference between M. *Franklin* and M. *Brown* was held at Doubting; I hope there was none given: But you do well to remember the place, it may put you in mind of the

doubtings of these times, being, for ought I know, the very times of which the Apostle speaks, 2 Tim. 3. compared with the 7. Verse, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, being carried about with every wind of doctrine. You call me M. *Franklins* Disciple, but I assure you, I desire to receive the truth, and the love of the truth without respect of persons, having not mens persons in admiration (or rather admiring not my selfe) because of advantage. You tell me, that I and some others of the like stamp occasion some to think and speak wickedly of those which are called Independents. Sir, what do you meane by this, that I and others of the like stamp speak against those as are of no stamp? Or are you angry, because some men adhere to all truths, and have the stamp of the Spirit of God upon their hearts? 2 Cor. 3. 3. But suppose we receive the reproach, for others I cannot answer, but shall utterly deny that ever I spake against all those: some of them my soule loves; nor will some, viz. M. *Burroughs*, M. *Goodwin*, &c. countenance you in speaking against baptizing of infants. But tell me, what mean you by Independents, Anabaptists, Antinomians, Socinians, Papists, Royallists, Common-Prayer-men, and such like: all these would be Independents; should any of them, think you, be spoken against? there can be but one truth, and he that shal discountenance the tenents of one, must in reason discountenance the rest: you seem to maintain all, and will stop the mouths of all gainsayers; let not him that putteth on his armour boast as he that putteth it off; you endeavour (as though M. *Brown* were then too weak to make good what he said) like a faithfull friend, and a forward Champion to step in for a second. My memory cannot retain all that then past: onely I know M. *Brown* asked a word for Childrens Baptisme, M. *Franklin* replied, by demanding a word for baptizing of the children of believers, when they came to yeares: his answer was, that they were baptized as believers, which was not to the purpose: for the question was concerning the children of believers grown up, making a confession, and he tells us of believers, which was never in question. As for the text brought by way of argumentation, your pen, memory, or both faile you much; that which you bring for the first argument, was indeed the last, and the answer was like the snuffe of a candle, which went out with a stink, and made our very eares to tingle. You know there was no way to put it off,

but

but by denying the authority of Scripture as being the words of a man, not of Christ: and truly Sir, 'twas time for M. *Franklin* to be gone, and others too, to quit the place, such horrid blasphemies being vented against the word of God in a full Congregation. The Second Argument that M. *Franklin* brought out of 1 *Cor.* 10.1,2,3. how ever you slight it, gave the hearers much satisfaction; but you will give us the true meaning of the place, & by the next, because you are so well skilled in Scriptures you will give us the meaning of other places also, as that in *Zac.* 13. 3,4,5. I ask the meaning of this place, not only because of your knowledg (which you know to be great) but because M. *Burroughes* saies it is spoken of these times, as you may find in his *Heart-Divisions*; as also being at leasure, let us know the meaning of that fore-warning of our Saviour in Mat. 24.24,25,26. In the 3. *v.* you have 3. queries propounded by the Disciples; 1 When the destruction of Jerusalem should be; 2 What the sign of his coming should be, that is as it is conceived his coming in the Gospel; 3 What are the signs of the end of the world? The former verses seem to answer the 2d querie, but we shall not be too credulous till we know your judgment: you may if you please, give us the meaning of that place in 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3. and tell us whether there be any fear of such men now; as also what the Apostle *Jude* means in the 12. & 13. verses of his Epistle, whether or no he doth not hint at those as deny repentance: and lastly, because you are upon the way of interpreting dark places, let us know how the Church of Pergamus came to be questioned for suffering the Balaamites and Nicolaitanes, Rev. 2.12,13,14. and was afterward in probability for this sin unchurched; should not men have liberty of Conscience? I am so ignorant that I want information in many other texts, but I shall but name them, as Rom. 10.15. 1 Tim. 5.22. 1 Tim. 4.14. but I return to give a word or two in Answer to your Reply to your 2d Argument: 1 I do not understand you when you say, That Sacraments under the Law, tipifie Sacraments under the Gospel; I thought they had been types of Christ, nor was that the substance of M. *Franklin's* Argument. 2 Whereas you say, That Christ only is to be heard, we deny it not; nor though he presse the Law as he doth Mat. 5.17,18,19.21.28. yet is he not to be called legall. 3 I know no man as saies, we are to adhere to the type and forsake the anti-tipe. 4 That seems strange (under correction) that

ſay all, I tell you, they had the ſame way to heaven as we have, and heaven was never promiſed to the reprobate, and the righteous had their juſtification only in Chriſt, Heb. 9. 19, 20. 5 Whereas you ſay, That oxen and ſheep were not baptized; how ridiculous is this? were ever the Ordinances of God in queſtion to be beſtowed on bruit beaſts? Laſtly, whereas you ſay, That Baptiſme cannot profit infants if not within the decree: who doubts it not? neither can it profit men of riper years if not in the decree, and ſo by this Argument you may exclude all Ordinances. Sir, this Argument hath been debated by men of riper wits and wiſer judgements, and ſuch as are known to receive the Goſpel, not in word only but in power: I ſhall therefore ſeeing M. *Tombes* your greateſt champion hath ſlubbered over a Reply to 5 or 6 men in a little Book which gives no ſatisfaction to any one of them; I ſhall deſire you to Anſwer Doct. *Holmes* (one as I approve wel of though an Independent) you may alſo read and reply to M. *Marſhal*, M. *Blake*, M. *Geare*, M. *Huſſey*, &c.

Sir, you may think I am very loath to enter the field with one as is known in print to be ſufficiently able to weaken a good cauſe, & therefore will not be ſo eaſily reclaimed from an Error. There are other things more eaſily apprehended by a weak capacitie, wherein if you pleaſe I ſhall grapple with you: I would willingly know, becauſe uſually one Error drawes on another as the needle doth the thred, what you think of theſe particulars. 1 Whether it be lawfull to confeſſe ſins to God? 2 Whether we may pray for the pardon of ſin? 3 Whether we ought to be ſorrowfull for ſin? 4 Whether the Law be null under the Goſpel? I am afraid you have undertaken a bold and troubleſome Scholler: I beſeech you take the next opportunity to informe

Shepton-Mallet
Octob. 31. 1646.

Your well-wiſhing friend,
Geo. Milward.

SIR,

SIR, I have received your Letter, (if it may be ſaid) in Anſwer to that which I formerly ſent you: truly for my part I cannot perceive it to be any anſwer at all; but I rather perceive by it, that you are extreme angry with me, and I know not wherefore; unleſſe it be for the diſcovery of thoſe truths I lately ſent you, but if that be the only cauſe, I can aſſure you, it is without juſt cauſe, for I wiſh your ſouls health; therefore to deal plainly with you, your lines ſavour very little of a ſpirit rightly qualified, and carry in them ſuſpition of ſpirituall pride and ſelf-love, as though you were of the very ſame mould and ſtamp with the Nationall Preſbyterian tythe-mongers, who care more to get a goodly fat benifice, then to cure a diſeaſed ſoul laden with ſin, and full of iniquitie; for there is not one particular thing throughout your whole piece (though voluminous) that ſavours of that ſpiritual Balſome which heals wounded ſpirits, by the application of faith in the bloud of Chriſt. But Sir, why ſo angry with me? and yet ſeemingly wiſh me well at home with my familie in a lawful calling, that we eat not the bread of idleneſſe, importing that my Military calling is not lawful, and that we eat the bread of idleneſſe. Truly Sir, I had no thoughts of Reply; but becauſe you charge me ſo fiercely at the firſt onſet touching my calling, I have received your charge, and with very little loſſe; I ſhall therefore boldly adventure upon a ſecond encounter (being a tried Souldier) and ſhall endeavour the beſt I can, to give you the rout. But before I fall on, I muſt look how I ſhall quit my ſelf of the firſt charge.

Sir, I muſt confeſſe, you are a bold Champion to queſtion my calling; for in ſo doing, you do not only queſtion me, but the Authority of Parliament, from whom I had my Commiſſion, and alſo his Excellency Sir *Thomas Fairfax*, under whoſe command I am: for as the Centurion, I am a man under authority, having ſouldiers under me; & certainly the Centurions calling was lawfull, and ſo is mine, he could not lay down his Commiſſion at his own will and pleaſure, neither can I.

But Sir, you tell me that you like the State ſervice well, and withal, that the War is ended: truly for my part, if it be not, I could heartily wiſh it were. Sir, you may do very well to carry this good newes to the Parliament, they (will no doubt) thank you for it, if it be a truth, and give you a good reward for your paines; for I can aſſure you, the Parliament is very bountifull to

all

all that bring glad tydings: nay, paradventure yon may get a good office to boote, and (for ought I know) you may be made one of the Cl-----asſes, therefore poſt away, *tantara ra-ra tantara.*

But ſtay Sir, before you take your journey, it would not be amiſſe for to be throughly informed, to whom theſe glorious priviledges (that you ſpeak of) do belong: You ſay they do belong to the people of God, and I ſay ſo too: for ſuch glorious priviledges belong to none elſe but the people of God, none but they being capable of them: for viſible adminiſtrations require a viſible rule, and viſible ſubjects, as for infants you will not ſay (I preſume) that they are viſible beleevers; and if not ſo, how capable of ſuch an Ordinance? Again, if it be a duty, then it muſt anſwer a command, but there is no command for it, therefore no duty: if only a ſuppoſed duty, then the ſuppoſition lies on the contrary ſide, as on that; and if ſo be you adminiſter the Sacrament of Baptiſme according to the fleſh, without a viſible rule, you may by conſequence, upon the ſame grounds, adminiſter the Sacrament of the Lords Supper to infants, the manifeſtation of faith being the rule we ought to walk by, in both adminiſtrations: and in ſo doing you caſt away the glory of thoſe ſpirituall priviledges, for what is not of faith is ſin, Rom. 14.23. and without faith, it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, Heb. 11.6.

Sir, you ask me whether I am angry? becauſe men cleave to old truths, and have the ſtamp of the Spirit of God upon their hearts. I anſwer no, I am a lover of old truths my ſelf, and a lover of ſuch men as have the ſtamp of the Spirit upon their ſouls: but truly for my part, I am affraid that theſe are old Hereſies that you ſpeak of, of 800 years ſtanding and upwards, and hath the ſtamp of a malignant ſpirit, and not of the good Spirit.

You ſay alſo that we are of no ſtamp: and deſire to be informed what Independents, Anabaptiſts, Antinomians, Socinians, Papiſts, Royalliſts, Common-prayer-men are, and the like; and ſay that all theſe will be Independents too. I muſt tell you Sir, as for the three firſt, I know that there is a ſweet communion and fellowſhip, a ſweet harmony and very good agreement in the fundamentals, although ſome ſmall difference in opinion touching order: and I can aſſure you, that there is a wonderfull ſpiritual love, unity, & unanimity of ſpirit amongſt them, that the men of the world cannot judge what they are: and truly Sir, they are

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but anabaptizd into thoſe nick-names by the national Presbyterians; but the reaſon is, becauſe they are the beſt and pureſt ſort of Presbyterians themſelves; but as for Socinians, Royallists, Common-prayer-men, Formallists, Atheists, and Arrians, they are all Proteſtants too, of an old ſtamp, although of a new Nationall, Provinciall, Parochiall, Claſſical order: and I conceive you may do well, to take in the Papiſts amongſt you, to make up the number ſeven, for although you differ ſomething in profeſſion, yet there is but little difference in practice, for ye all deny Chriſt to be come in the fleſh, as I ſhall make it evident hereafter: And I can aſſure you, that none of your grand Presbyterian Prieſts can be admitted but upon Scripture grounds to be members of our Independent Church; but I muſt tell you, that theſe ſeven-----before mentioned, may make a pretty National Presbyterian Church in time, and yet come very ſhort of thoſe ſeven Churches of Aſia ſpoken of Rev. 1. 4. which verſ. 20. are ſaid to be ſeven golden candleſticks, and certainly in thoſe golden candleſticks, there were glorious lights, for they are there compared to the ſeven ſtars, and the ſeven ſtars ſignifie the Angels of the ſeven Churches, and thoſe Churches being reduced into one Church, there muſt needs be a far more glorious light. And as for thoſe ſeven, to wit, Socin. Arrians, Papiſts, Common-prayer-men, Formaliſts, &c. they may have a viſible ſanctity, yet will not we call them a Church, but a Synagogue of Satan, becauſe they want a right diſpenſation of doctrin and Sacraments, and cannot be compared to the ſeven golden candleſticks, but rather to ſeven dark Lanterns, where there is, as it were, but a ſmall glimmering of light; and if ſo be theſe ſeven dark Lanterns were reduced but to one dark Lantern, there would be a huge great dark Lantern. But I paſſe from that to the next.

Sir, you tell me that M. *Burroughes*, M. *Goodwin*, *&c.* will not countenance me in ſpeaking againſt infants baptiſme: as if I ſhould pin my faith upon other mens ſleeves, as too many do. You alſo deſire me to read and reply to M. *Marſhal*, M. *Blake*, M. *Geare*, M. *Huſſey*, *&c.* whoſe works I never yet ſaw concerning that ſubject; ſure I am, the two former have been ſufficiently anſwered, and their arguments reſolved into their firſt nothing; the arguments of the two latter are (I ſuppoſe) as invalid as the two former. But me thinks you ſhould have put Doctor *Featly* into your Catalogue,

Catalogue, are his works out of date with you? he was one of your learned Doctors whilſt living, and his works are yet exſtant: me thinks he ſhould be Canoniz'd for a Saint amongſt the reſt: I have ſeen his Book, intituled, *The Dipper dipt*, concerning a Diſpute between him, and ſome Anabaptiſts in Southwark (as he ſtiles them) and I can tell you by a very good token, there is his Effigies in his Frontiſpiece, very ſpruce in his deminican ruffe and his brave pontificall robes, like a painted ſepulcher without, but within, nothing but rottennes, a whole bundle of errors.

But Sir, you ſay that uſually one Error drawes on another as the needle doth the thred: truly for my part I cannot excuſe my ſelf, neither can I excuſe you, ſo far as to render your work to be an infallible truth, being all more or leſſe incident unto Error. But I believe, that *Franklin* could have given you many thanks, if you would have taken him off from thoſe groſſe Errors and abſurdities committed by him at the Conference which I charged him withall in my laſt. Are you convinc'd in Conſcience, that you ſtand not in vindication of his reputation? but rather charge M. *Brown* with horrid blaſphemies: Truly Sir, you might have done wel to have expreſt thoſe blaſphemies that we might know them, and ſo learn to avoid them; for my part I heard none, and yet (as I thought) was a diligent hearer; but I partly perceive whence this charge doth ariſe, but let that paſſe too.

Sir, you tell me that you are unwilling to enter the field, with one that is known in print, to be ſufficiently able to weaken a good cauſe, and therefore not eaſily to be reclaimed of an Error: Truly Sir, you may do very well to correct the faults, and ſend the book to me, for there are ſome faults in printing, as well as in writing, and I will have an Errata printed, and withall corrected and amended by M. *George Milward*: and I ſhall give you many thanks, and acknowledge my faults too. But I am very confident that you never ſaw my book, but very fairly take things upon truſt as other men do: truly you may do well to correct your own faults (if there be any) for I mean to ſet you forth in print too.

You charge me to be ridiculous, in ſaying that oxen and ſheep were not baptized: and ask me, whether ever the Ordinances of God were in queſtion to be beſtowed on bruit beaſts? But Sir, do you indeed underſtand your own propoſition? if ſo, wil you ſtand to it? Was the Iſraelites paſſing through the ſea, a ſtanding Ordi-

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nance of God, or was the ſame with Chriſts Ordinance of baptiſm now: one or both your queres ſeem to import, but grant it were ſo (which you cannot without groſſe abſurdity atteſt) yet (to club you with your own argument) ſuch an Ordinance is not to be beſtowed on bruit beaſts, which the Holy Ghoſt termes all to be, in their naturall eſtate, till there be a new creation: if ſo, I pray what rule have you to judg otherwiſe of infants, except you will take upon you Gods Prerogative, to judge of the ſpirit? for though we are not to judge of the finall eſtate of any, who are elect, and who are not, yet we have the rule of Chriſt, Mat.7.16. Acts 8.36,37. to judge of the preſent eſtate of ſuch as are admitted to Church-Ordinances, but I have no ſuch fooliſh charity as to judge infants capable of any Ordinance; for, a man hath no preheminence above a beaſt, in reſpect of his naturall condition, as you may ſee in Eccleſ.3.19. what befalleth the ſons of men, befalleth beaſts: as one dieth, ſo dieth the other, they have all one breath: nay the Prophet *David* ſaith, that a *man being in honour, without underſtanding, is like unto the beaſt that periſheth.* Now I pray conſider theſe places of Scriptures, and tell me, whether Infants (whileſt they are ſo) can have any more underſtanding then bruit beaſts till there be a regeneration and new birth in the creature: for we were all naturally the children of Gods wrath, Eph.2.3. and an infant muſt needs be in his corruption and filth, till there be a new birth. But I paſſe from this, and haſten to the grand buſineſſe of all.

Sir, you deſire me to give you the meaning of divers texts in Scripture, and your reaſon is (as you ſay) becauſe I undertake to interpret dark places: and you tell me that I know my judgment to be good. Alas Sir, my judgment is very mean and weak, and I ſhall acknowledge it to be ſo; for I know but in part, but very deſirous to learn: yet notwithſtanding I will make bold (by the help of God) to venture upon the firſt text; and if ſo be I do not lay down the ſenſe and meaning thereof, according to the mind and will of God, I ſhall intreat you to bear with me, and correct my faults. The text is Zechariah 13.3, 4,5. I ſhall only give you my judgment hereof, and refer all the other texts unto the ſame party that did help you in this great and moſt excellent piece of work of yours: for I am confident, that he is the beſt able to give you the true ſenſe and meaning

of those Scriptures experimentally. And so I come to the text.

Zechariah 13.3,4,5. I conceive that these places of Scriptures are a description of the false Prophets of these times, such as do yet prophecie lies, and yet it is said they propheſie in the name of the Lord: they shall receive sharp reproofs, and shall be ashamed of their errors, and shall no more weare a rough garment, neither shall they weare Prophets apparell to deceive, but shall confesse their own ignorance, and that they are no Prophets, but shall be contented to work for their own livings. Now the rough garment here spoken of, is meant (as I conceive) the outward habit or vestment, which was to distinguish the Prophets from the people; as it is now in our times with the Clergie, for they wear black garments, because they would be distinguished from the Laitie, as they term them: but here I find also an inward garment of false doctrines proceeding from an evill, corrupted and falſe heart; for my text saith, they propheſie lies in the Name of the Lord: and therefore 'tis high time to look about us. Sir, I have given you my judgment herein, and I hope according to truth.

I pray let us now consider of a way, how to find out these false Prophets, and that will be by answering some Queries. Well, I would faine go the best way to discover them. The first Querie, who are these false Prophets? 2. How may they be known. 3. Where may they be found? As for the first Querie, I shall answer negatively: certainly they are not such as are called Tub-Preachers, Independents, Anabaptists, Antinomians; for these are all one in the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And although they are nick-named by severall titles, yet doubtlesse they are such as have the stamp of Gods spirit upon their soules, whose image and superscription they weare about them in their brests, even the brest-plate of holinesse and righteousnesse: they are despised persons, and such as were heretofore accounted Puritans, Anabaptists, but the word Independent and Antinomian have been but of late years in use; yet howsoever these are the men that the Lord hath been pleased to crown with honour and victory (as instruments) ever since these warres began; and they have been, and are both faithfull to God and all good men, although the world hates them, and accounts them Sectaries and Schismaticks; but this

is no newes to be so accounted; for it was ever so with the Puritanes of old. But I must tell you, that there are two sorts of Puritans now; there is the Independent Puritane, and there is the Presbyterian Puritane; I must confesse I love them both well, yet I conceive that the Independent Puritane out-strips the other both in doctrin and practice, for he goes most near to the Apostles rules. But I pray excuse me, I do the rather make this distinction, because I may the better discover this false Prophet, I have shewed you who he is not like: I shall now endeavour to shew you who he is like, and by what marks and signs he may be known; which is the second quere: I must confesse I have met with something by chance for my purpose, that I shall make bold withall, it will help me much in the discovery of this false Prophet: and by the discovery of him, I shall discover a multitude; I shall therefore make use of my Authors own words, that he useth to discover Antichrist, the man of sin, which is the very same false Prophet here spoken of in my text. He tells me that *the surest way to discover Antichrist, is by the fruit of his lips, by the discipline of his mouth:* so that here we shall find what language he is of too. For my Author tells me plainly, *That if we look upon the Apostles of Christ and the man of sin, we shall find both of them holy in Conversation, yea so holy that who can discern them, the one from the other; therefore we must expect the voice, and ponder the doctrine:* It is the counsell of an Apostle in the same case, *If any man come and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed,* 2 Joh. 10. *If we or an Angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you,* Gal. 1. 8. *When a Wolfe cometh in Sheeps clothing, how shall we discern in the flock, which is the wolfe, when both are fleeced alike? must we not wait untill they utter their voices? & then we shall discern that the one bleateth and the other barketh. We read of a beast* Rev. 13. 12. *(the Lord deliver us from him) that hath horns like a Lamb, and he spake like a Dragon: though we cannot discern him by his horns, yet we may easily know him by his Dragon-like voice.* Furthermore my Author tells me a story of a man of *Cuma, who did put a Lions skin very artificially upon the back of an Asse: the inhabitants of the place were much terrified, supposing that a Lion indeed had been come amongst them, untill the Asse at his accustomed*

customed time, began to bray like an Asse; so soon as they heard not the roaring of the Lion but the braying of an Asse, their fears were changed into laughter.

He farther tels me what course *Jephthah* took to discern the Ephraimites from the Gileadites, at the foards of Jordan, *Judg.* 12.6. their faces were alike, their harnesse alike, their colours alike, their garments alike, and yet he discerneth them by their tongues; *Say now Shibboleth: and he said, Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it.* This will be the triall of the man of sin, of the members of Antichrist, of this false Prophet here spoken of in my text: when they have their senses exercised, shall discern them to cry Sibboleth in the doctrine of godlines. So that here you may see, that there is need of a spirituall eye of discerning: and you may also see, how I am beholding to my friend for so much light in the discovery of this false Prophet. Me thinks I have a glance of him already, I see him afar off; certainly I shall find him out: but I must make a little bold with the good prophet *Jeremiah* to help me: for there I shall find in the 5 chap. of his book, about the beginning of the chap. the Lord speaks by the mouth of his Prophet to the people of Jerusalem; *If ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgement, that speaketh the truth, and he will pardon the City*, v. 1. He farther declares and shewes what these men are; They are professors, such as make a profession of the truth; nay, they pretend much zeal to the truth, they use ordinances, they have a forme of godlinesse, but deny the power thereof; they can go far to crack the shell, but they cannot go so far as to eat the kernel: they cannot taste the marrow and sweetnesse of the Ordinances. *For though they say the Lord liveth, yet they swear falsely*, as in vers. 2. *They have refused to receive correction, they have their faces harder then a Rock, and have refused to return*, v. 3 And in v. 4. the Prophet saith, *Surely these are poor, they are foolish, they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgement of their God.*

Thus you see what it is to be but a bare outward professor; to use ordinances, and not to live by ordinances, or about ordinances (I mean in the spirituall enjoyment of them) is to live so low, so poor, so foolish as the Prophet here speaks of. But are there no false Prophets amongst these men? yea doubtlesse there are. Well, I will enquire once more of the Pro-

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phet *Jeremiah*, and crave his aid and assistance herein; and I do believe he will help me find out this false Prophet; and if so be I find out one, I shall then discover a multitude (as I said before) five thousand at least. Well, he directs me to the last verse of the 5 Chap. of his Propheſie. I will read the words that you may be the better able to judge with me, that he is the very same man that I have so earnestly enquired after all this while, the false Prophet spoken off in my text: the words are these, *The Prophets propheſie falsely, the Priests bear rule, &c.* Ha-ha, have I found him? the Priests bear rule? then he is a ruling Priest as well as a false Prophet, I did think I should meet with him at last in a pulpit. He did use (heretofore) to weare a black Canonicall Cassocke, but now the times have altered the fashion. He can transforme himself into an Angel of light, like unto the false Apostles 1 Cor. 11. 13, 14, 15. and no marvell, for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of light; therefore it is no great thing, if his Ministers also be transformed as the Ministers of righteousneſſe, &c. They are very zealous, they make a fair shew in the flesh, Gal. 6. 12. He can put on a vizard of holineſſe. This false Prophet comes after the working of Satan, with al power, and signs, and lying wonders: with all deceivableneſſe of unrighteousneſſe, 2 Thes. 2. 9, 10. nay, he can bring many excellent truths of God kindled at the flames of his Altar, he can propheſie falsly, he can bear rule by their means, and the people love to have it so; but what will ye do in the end thereof? surely this Prophet will come to a shamefull end: for my text saith, *He shall be ashamed of his propheſie, and shall say he is no Prophet, but a husbandman, and a heardsman from his youth up.* Here you see what his confeſſion shall be, enough to condemne him.

But you will say, that I must call him by his name, before I passe sentence: Yea that I will. I have Anabaptiz'd him too; his name is National Presbyterian-tythe-monger; you know his name was false Prophet before, but now I am his Gaffer, and have given him a new name: but yet for all this, before I passe sentence, I will see what evidence the Prophet *Isaiah* hath against him in the 56 of his propheſie; the words are these, *And these greedy dogs can never have enough: and these sheepheards cannot understand, for they all look to their own way, every*

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one for his own advantage, and for his own purpose. Certainly these are the false Prophets spoken of in my text: for you see the Prophet *Isaiah* calls them sheepheards, and greedy dogs; now I pray you tell me whether or no, this fellow which I have newly Anabaptiz'd, be not one of them? I ask you for no hurt: but yet howsoever I will have more evidence against him before I passe sentence. Well, here is the Prophet *Ezek.* to give evidence in the 34 Chap. of his book, and the 2d vers. *Ye eat the fat, and ye cloth you with the woll: ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the sheep.* Well, I will crave your judgement in this too: See whether or no this be not a right tythe-monger; the very same false Prophet that is here before us at the bar. We will hear what evidence the Prophet *Micah* will give in against him, and so proceed to sentence. In his 3d Chap. of his prophesie, vers. 5. he saith, *They bite with their teeth, and cry peace: and he that putteth not into their mouth, they even prepare war against him.* How! War? nay then tis time to passe sentence, for the last War was the Bishops War, and surely we will prevent this if we can: therefore stand up and hear thy sentence.

Thou National Presbyterian tythe-monger, thou spawne of a Bishop, thou that fishest in troubled waters; hear thy sentence: Thou hast lived this 800 years and upwards, by the sweat of other mens browes: thou shalt now be an husbandman, an heardsman; now thou must work thy self, thou must now labour to get thy living by the sweat of thine own brows. Oh, saith he, This is a hard sentence; I cannot work, I was never bred to work, I have been choicely bred up at the University, and shall I work? no I cannot work; but I'le tell thee what the Apostle saies, If thou wilt not work, neither shalt thou eat. Nay I'le tell thee what thy father and thy mother that begat thee, saith, Thou shalt not live: they will thrust thee through: and doest thou say thou wilt not work? I tell thee thou shalt work, or else thou shalt not eat. And the truth of it is, I must passe the like sentence upon all the rest of thy fraternity: for it is more fit for them to go to hedging and ditching, then to take upon them the Ministery of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For you see I have made it evident, who these false Prophets are, and how they may be known;

They

They are ſuch as take Tythes, and Baptize infants, having no command nor warrant from the Word of God for neither; but are under the reproof of our Saviour Chriſt, *who hath required theſe things at your hands?* they are ſuch as pray for themſelves by this Epithete, for a bleſſing upon the Tribe of Levi, the lot of thine inheritance, as if they were lineally deſcended from the very loynes of that Tribe. Nay they are ſuch as are very zealous of the truth, in their way (as I ſhewed you before) and yet by their practice they deny Chriſt come in the fleſh, Gal. 4. 3,4,5. they are kept ſtill in bondage under the elements of the world.

For, whoſoever do pay Tithes, or receive Tithes, doe deny Chriſt come in the fleſh. But ſuch is the practice of our times, the people pay, and the Clergie receive: *Ergo*, they deny Chriſt come in the fleſh.

2 Whoſoever either by example or practice do keep in uſe any thing which was lawfull in the time of the Law, and ſince fulfilled and ended by Chriſt, now in the time of the Goſpell, doe deny Chriſt come in the fleſh. But all thoſe which do pay tithes, or receive tithes, do keep in uſe that which was lawfull in the time of the Law, and ſince fulfilled and ended by Chriſt now in the time of the Goſpell. *Ergo*, they deny Chriſt come in the fleſh. And this I prove, Heb. 7. 5. 12. Verſes.

Thus you may ſee evidently, as in a glaſſe, who theſe falſe Prophets are: I pray tell me whether or no they are the Clergie of theſe times, I meane Tithe-mongers, ſuch as deny Chriſt to be come in the fleſh: and if ſo be you have a ſpirituall eye of diſcerning, you cannot chooſe but ſee their black garments, and their moath-eaten doctrines: and, although their power be upheld for a time, and they receive theſe unhallowed tithes, yet I am perſwaded they will have as great a fall as ever the Biſhops had: For, take away tithes, and down falls the Prieſt; then you ſhall have him comply with the times, and be metamorphoſed into an Independent preſently, if he may have admittance: but the Lord will one day deſtroy Antichriſtian darkneſſe, with the breath of his mouth and brightneſſe of his coming. But the glaſſe is out, and therefore I haſten to the next in order.

I ſhall crave a little of your ----- chriſtian patience, becauſe

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(I must confesse) I have been somwhat large in this particular; and the more, because it much concernes us all, to labour to know and find out the false Prophets, that we may the better take heed how to avoid both their doctrine and practice: I shal now proceed to the next particulars, which are your foure queres: but before I enter upon them, I shall make bold to propound one quere to you.

I understand that you have a neighbour, that is a friend of mine, is accused for sheep-stealing. I pray tell me, how he is like to speed: I hope he is not like to suffer for it; for there may be some fault in the shepheard: for many shepheards are careless of their sheep, so that they may get the fleece; I could wish him to be very carefull, and diligent to search, and see where he can find out either fell or mark, that he may not accuse him wrongfully. But I leave this to your grave & prudent considerations, and so passe to the queres.

1 Whether it be lawfull to confesse sins to God.
2 Whether we may pray for the pardon of sin.
3 Whether we ought to be sorrowfull for sin.
4 Whether the Law be null under the Gospell.

I shall by the assistance of God (according to that light he hath given me) handle the three first both joyntly and severally, and so give you my judgment and resolution concerning them all (and I hope) according to Gospell-truths, and so dismisse you for the present.

To which I answer affirmatively, that all these things may be done in respect of the circumstantialls: but I shall for our more orderly proceeding, first consider the circumstances or concomitants, having a relation or dependence one upon the other: 1. Without a sight of sin, there can be no confession nor contrition. 2. It is by faith the soule comes to enjoy remission of sins and justification; so that there is the soules apprehension by faith, of the forgivenesse of sins, and justification by Christ, and not by the Law of *Moses*, Acts 13.38,39. 3. This faith produceth repentance, which is a change of the mind, and godly Gospell-sorrow, flowing from a principle of love; and so the believers sorrow is a sorrow flowing from love, and not from feare; for we are not come to Mount Sinai, but to Mount Sion, Heb. 12.

And

And now considering these circumstances, and divers others that may arise from hence, it will be a means to bring us to a right understanding how these things are to be performed, and by whom: I shall therefore make a distinction between believers and unbelievers, as the Lord speaks by the mouth of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Thou shalt separate the precious from the vile, then shalt thou be my mouth to the people*: intimating thereby, that there must be a separation between believers and unbelievers: for, these things cannot be performed by any creature, but such as the Lord gives power and abilities to perform; and therefore I shall shew you, that there is an externall confession and sorrow for sin, which is Pharisaicall, proceeding from a corrupted and false heart; and *Judas* had many excellent externall performances, and yet he hang'd himselfe. Now there is a godly sorrow and confession, which is internall, proceeding from a pure and sincere heart: so that faith and repentance being (as it were) linked and chain'd together, shew forth the integrity and sincerity of the heart, in life and conversation. Now the best of all externall performances cannot availe the creature any thing at all, unlesse there be an internall habit of grace flowing from Christ, by his spirit upon the soule: for all internall principles are wrought by the Spirit of God, in the soule of every true believer, and flow meerly and simply from the love of God in Christ, as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, Eph. 1. 4.

Sir, it seems to me by stating of your questions, that you lay all these things upon the creature, as a dutie to be performed by him, when alas the poore creature is not able to perform any thing at all; for all these things are acted and wrought in the creature, by the Spirit of God about the time of conversion; and therfore the wicked and ungodly wretches cannot confesse their sins to God, nor pray for pardon of sin, but verbally, with the tongue and lips; and such prayers and performances are abominable in the sight of God: the Scripture saith, that God is a consuming fire, and that the wicked are as stubble; so the more neer the stubble is brought to the fire, the more in danger it is to be burnt: It is even so with the wicked, the more neer they come unto God in their prayers and externall performances, the sooner they will be consumed.

And thus you may see 'tis cleere, that the wicked and such as are unbelievers, cannot pray for pardon of sin, in the acceptation of God. Now such as belong to the election of his free grace (about the time of conversion) can pray for the pardon of sin by the assistance, operations and workings of the Spirit, (having their sins laid open before them) so likewise believers, such as are growne Christians, may pray for pardon of sin, although they certainly know that their sins are pardoned; the which pardon was purchased by the most precious bloud of the Son of God: and yet for all this, whensoever any such soule comes to powre forth his prayers unto God (his spirit being carried forth thereunto) he may pray for pardon of sin, that is, for a further manifestation of that pardon; or a more full assurance of that pardon.

As for example; a malefactor, such a one as hath committed Felonie or Treason against the King, and being (by the Law) condemned to die for this Treason or Felonie, and carried to the place of execution, there to hang till he be dead; and in the meane time comes a pardon under the Kings own hand and Seale, this Malefactor sees his pardon, and at the apprehension thereof, his heart leaps for joy; nay he doth not onely see his pardon, but is also set at liberty by vertue of that pardon; what would you think of this man, if he should come into the Kings presence, and fall down before him, and beg pardon againe, and say, O my Soveraigne Lord the King, I have committed Treason against thy Majesty, I confesse it, and am heartily sorrie for it, and so beg pardon again, as if he had not been pardoned; and although he do beg pardon, yet it is but for a more full assurance or manifestation of that pardon. It is even so with Gods people, although they know that their sins are pardoned, the wrath and justice of God satisfied, remission of sinnes, and reconciliation with God, purchased and sealed with the bloud of Christ, made out unto the soule, by the receiving evidence of faith; and yet for all this, they may pray for a more full assurance and manifestation of that pardon, if their spirits are carried forth thereunto, as I said before. And now I shall speak something concerning the Law.

First, the Ceremoniall and Judiciall Law is abrogated by the coming of the *Messias*; for, it was only for a certain time prescribed.

ſcribed to the people of Iſrael, and the Morall Law ſtands perpetually, and the common uſe thereof belongs both to the elect (before converſion) & to the reprobate alſo, becauſe it bindeth all men (that are under it) to perform perfect obedience to God; but we muſt alſo conſider the circumſtances hereof: for if perfect obedience be required, then is the Law ſtill, as it was in the hand of *Moſes, Do this and live:* but now it is in the hand of a Mediator, believe and thou ſhalt be ſaved: for, the Prieſthood being changed, there is made of neceſſity a change alſo of the Law, Heb.7.12. This High Prieſt is not made after the law of a carnall commandement, but after the power of an endleſſe life, Verſ.16. It is true, that all naturall men are under the Law, and the Apoſtle ſaith, *Deſtruction and miſery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known*, Rom.3.16,17. yet it is as true, that the Law is not to be preached as a preparative to the Goſpell, but the Goſpell is the means in which Chriſt fits men for himſelfe; for it is granted on all hands, that it is the work of the Spirit to convince of ſin, Joh.16. and this Spirit is given in the preaching of the Goſpell, Gal.3.2. this further appears, if we conſider the Commiſſion of Chriſt, Mark 16.15. Go preach the Goſpell, &c. he doth not ſay, Go preach the Law firſt, and fit men for Chriſt, and then preach the Goſpell, but firſt preach the Goſpell: this was the practice of the Apoſtles, who well underſtood the mind of Chriſt, ſee Acts 2. *Peters* Sermon, Ch. 8.12. *Peters* preaching peace, Chap.10. 1 Cor.15.3.

Secondly, The Law as it was in the hand of *Moſes* is not a rule to believers, but as it is in the hand of Chriſt, who hath fulfilled the righteouſneſſe of it; ſee Rom.7. about the beginning of the Chapter, 2 Cor.3. from the 6. to the 13. Rom.10.4. True it is, the Law is in as full power and force (to them that are under the Law) as ever it was: but believers, and ſuch as are in Chriſt, are no longer under the Law, but under grace: the Apoſtle ſaith, the Law was a Schoolemaſter to bring us unto Chriſt, he doth not ſay, it is a Schoolemaſter; nay the originall doth render it thus, The Law was a Schoolemaſter untill Chriſt, Gal.3.24,25. that we might be juſtified by faith; ſo that after juſtification by faith we are no longer under a ſchoolmaſter: for believers know aſſuredly, that Chriſt hath fulfilled the Law for them, & to them, & therfore the Law cannot be a ſchoolmaſter.

unto them: nay Christ is the end of the Law; he is the new Covenant: I will (saith he) put my Lawes into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, Heb.8.10. So you may see, that Christ will write his lawes in the hearts of believers, such as are in Christ; and the Apostle saith, that we are delivered from the Law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newnesse of spirit, and not in the oldnesse of the letter, Rom.7.6. So that you may easily see, that the condemnatory power of the Law is taken away by Christ, as everie believer is justified by Christ, so is he freed from the Law; & a believer cannot look back unto the Law as it was in the hand of *Moses*, unlesse he should look for a new Christ, or a new act to be performed by Christ; and whatsoever Christ requires (in obedience to himselfe) of a believer, he gives power and abilities to performe. I shall also tell you, that the mystery of the Gospel is a hidden mystery, and cannot be understood but by the Spirit; for none can unletter the letter but the spirit, and therfore the naturall man cannot find out the depth of it, but is kept still under the power of the Law. I might be very large in these particulars, but time prevents me, and I feare me I have trespassed too much upon your patience, and therefore I will give you but a word or two in the illustration of this point, and so dismisse you.

Therefore I pray let me crave your best attention: and I shall shew you that the operations and workings of the spirit, upon the soul of every true beleever, doth teach him to walk in obedience to the commands of Christ; the spirit being the revealing evidence to the soul, and faith the receiving evidence. Now the spirit doth dictate to the soul of every true beleever: and faith is a full perswasion of the heart, grounded upon the promises of God in and through Christ, by which the soul is raised, and carried up into the very bosome and loves of Christ, and tastes of the sweet imbraces of the very acts of his loves: and there is a reciprocall love between Christ and the soul of his Saints. The Saints love Christ, because Christ loved them first. All graces are necessary consequences of faith: and yet they are but fruits and effects of the Spirit. Faith and Repentance go both together, Act.8. 12.37. But the witnesse

neſſe of the ſpirit is the ſeal of the covenant of grace, between Chriſt and the ſoul of every true beleever: for as a covenant made between party and party, and ſealed before witneſſe, the evidence is good: but if it be not ſealed before witneſſe, then can that party have but ſmall intereſt in that Covenant. It is even ſo with every poor ſoul, when once he can have the witneſſe of the Spirit, to ſeal up his intereſt in the bloud of Jeſus Chriſt; then is his evidence good, and hath a ſure foundation to build upon, *Iſaiah* 28.16.

So that the concluſion will be thus: that the Law as it was in the hand of *Moſes*, cannot be a rule for a Chriſtian to walke by, becauſe he cannot fly from life to death; for the Law killeth, but the ſpirit giveth life. So that the ſpirit alone doth onely act in, and to the ſoule of everie true believer, and all the graces doe but keep up the ſoule to live holy and godly in this life, that he may reap a crowne of glorie in that glorious Kingdome of heaven hereafter: and the ſoule cannot enjoy one of the leaſt of the graces without the ſpirit, the ſpirit teacheth to deny all ungodlineſſe and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world: the ſpirit guides and leads a man unto all truth; for as many as are led by the ſpirit of God they are the ſons of God, Rom. 8. 14. The ſpirit helps our infirmities, ſo that the ſpirit doth both teach, guide, lead, and help; and the influence of that ſpirit gives light unto the ſoul: As the light of the body is the eye, ſo all graces flowing from the ſpirit, gives light unto the ſoul: and as a candle in a dark room, being lighted, give light unto all that are in it, from the fruits and effects of it; ſo if ſo be, it be extinguiſhed and put out, yet it retaines its firſt principle, and is a candle ſtill. It is even ſo with a ſoul in time of ſpirituall diſertion: the graces which flow from the ſpirit (being as it were) extinguiſht and put out, yet the ſpirit retains its firſt principle, and remains ſtill in the ſoul of every true beleever.

But thus much ſhall ſuffice for this time and for this text: the ſeaſon being ſomewhat cold, I ſhall not detain you any longer: You ſee I have given you a large deſcription of the falſe Prophets: although I have not replyed to every particular, yet I hope you will excuſe me, and the rather, becauſe I have forc'd my ſelf, to reply (in ſome things) according to your

your own dialect, in the very ſame phraſe and method: Therefore what broken expreſſions you find, I pray bear with them alſo. I have given you an account of my Faith in part, I could not do it fully, becauſe I know not what Faith ſhall be next. For I underſtand that there is a new confeſſion of Faith making now in London; and I am ſomewhat wavering and doubtfull what Faith we ſhall be of; whether Independent or Preſbyterian: I hear that the Confeſſion of Faith conſiſteth of 33. Chapters or Articles, if Free-will be one, then I ſhall have free-will to chuſe: Certainly I ſhall be of the Independent Faith (as you call it:) I have ſent you this New-years-gift inſtead of a Chriſtmaſſe Carole: it is a token of my love, in hope of a change both in judgement and life, with the New year, in putting off the Old man, and putting on the New, Eph. 4. 22, 23. which if I may have that happineſſe to find in you, I ſhall for ever remain

From my ſtudy at Coſſington
this 4 of January, 1646.

Yours to command,

Francis Freeman.

FINIS.

READER, in the ſecond of the foure Queres mentioned in the Title page, there is a miſtake, which thou art deſired to correct thus, 2 *Whether we may pray for the pardon of ſin*, and in page 16. line 35. for *about*, read *above*.